



Saguaro National Park News Release

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DEER HEAD FIRE CONTINUES TO PROVIDE RESOURCE BENEFITS FOR RINCON MOUNTAINS

Tucson, AZ –The lightning ignited Deer Head Fire, burning in the Rincon Mountains of Saguaro National Park, continues to provide resource benefits. The slow moving surface fire has grown to approximately 650 acres.

Fire fighters were hampered in efforts to conduct burnouts by a small amount of rain that fell over the fire area on Tuesday. These burnout operations along the north and south perimeter of the fire will be attempted again to insure Manning Camp is protected and to create additional firefighter safety zones.

Smoke columns might be observed, depending upon today's weather conditions over the fire area. Drier atmospheric conditions could any smoke to be observable from large distances around the perimeter of the Rincon Mountains.

As the fire continues to progress, it will vary in intensity, spread and duration with variations in topography, vegetation, and weather. All of these effects are beneficial to this wilderness ecosystem as it replicates conditions before European settlers enacted fire suppression efforts in previous centuries. It is anticipated the fire will gradually grow until the area receives significant precipitation. The tactic of using burnouts to direct the fire's spread allows resources to be protected as the burnout is done at times of cooler temperatures and higher humidity. This allows the fire to burn but with less intensity, which allows plants to survive. As the main fire approaches these burnouts, it is robbed of fuel and cannot progress in that direction. Burnout areas recover quickly after the fire is extinguished. Rincon Mountain District backcountry closures will remain in effect for the duration of the fire to ensure public safety.

Normal morning temperature inversion may cause some smoke to settle along the San Pedro Valley and eastern Tucson but should clear by mid-morning. Observers may notice increased fire activity today and tomorrow with the forecasted warmer and drier weather; however, meteorologists predict significant additional monsoonal moisture this weekend.

Additional information related to the Deer Head Fire is available at:

<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3999/>, <http://Facebook.com/SaguaroNationalPark> or call the Fire Information Hotline at (520) 733-5150.